IN ANY UNIVERSE

Why does he draw me so?

At first view in the market his alien beauty struck me,
Double chains, dirt and all. His gold eyes pierced my heart.
Praise the gods, I remembered my slave-trade bargaining sense;
Had the dealer only known, I'd have paid ten times the price.

Why do I need to possess him?

Gods know, I have slaves enough:
A moderate reputation for breeding and trading Exotics,
And a stable of choice examples.
What could I want with him?
Certainly not a breeder -- not with that stubborn pride.

Why does he fascinate me?

Is it the Human blood?
Some need (not again!) to prove
That my mother's slave-born species has left no taint in me?
Do I symbolize that conquest in flesh by taking him?

Why does his defiance delight me?

He struggled all the way here,
Even fought with the bath-attendants.
I ordered him brought to the bedroom
And guarded. I came back from dinner
To find the chamber a shambles and him busy strangling the sehlat.
The battle required to subdue him...
(Fortunately the furniture's heavy)
The joy of the conquest was equal to the final pleasure of taking.

Why am I so obsessed with him?

Just one more slave-world rebel, unyielding, fierce to the last...
Is it his very defiance that draws me again and again?
I can torment him with pleasure, make him cry, even beg, for release;
Yet his spirit remains unbroken.
As soon as his strength returns, the proud eyes lift again.
For only those moments before then can I say he is truly mine.
(Strange: I then treat him gently,
Almost...loving -- surprising myself.)